

## **Music in The Heart of Manila: Quiapo from the Colonial Period to Contemporary Times: Tradition, Change, Continuity**

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### **A brief history of Quiapo**

Quiapo is a key district of Manila, having as its boundaries the winding Pasig River and the districts of Sta. Cruz, San Miguel and Sampaloc. Its name comes from a floating water lily specie called *kiyapo* (*Pistia stratiotes*), with thick, light-green leaves, similar to a tiny, open cabbage. Pre-1800 maps of Manila show Quiapo as originally a cluster of islands with swampy lands and shallow waters (Andrade 2006, 40 in Zialcita), the perfect breeding place for the plant that gave its name to the district.

Quiapo's recorded history began in 1578 with the arrival of the Franciscans who established their main missionary headquarters in nearby Sta. Ana (Andrade 42), taking Quiapo, then a poor fishing village, into its sheepfold. They founded Quiapo Church and declared its parish as that of St. John the Baptist. The Jesuits arrived in 1581, and the discalced Augustinians in 1622 founded a chapel in honor of San Sebastian, at the site where the present Gothic-style basilica now stands. At about this time there were around 30,000 Chinese living in Manila and its surrounding areas, but the number swiftly increased due to the galleon trade, which brought in Mexican currency in exchange for Chinese silk and other products (Wickberg 1965). The Chinese, noted for their business acumen, had begun to settle in the district when Manila's business center shifted there in the early 1900s (originally from the Parian/Chinese ghetto beside Intramuros in the 1500s, to Binondo in the 1850s, to Sta.Cruz at the turn of the century).

By 1850, Quiapo was a small agricultural village with a growing population, the result of a developing economy in the wake of the galleon trade's termination in 1813 and the subsequent opening of the country to world trade in 1830. The newly rich *mestizos*, who were a mix of Chinese, Spanish, and native ancestry, started settling in Quiapo, as well as many well-heeled Europeans, including officers of the Spanish army. (Andrade 51).

Towards the turn of the century, Quiapo had transformed into a wealthy suburb, now administratively part of Manila, which previously had originally been restricted to Intramuros only.<sup>1</sup> It boasted stately homes, the most beautiful street in Manila (R.Hidalgo), the loveliest park in Manila (Plaza del Carmen), and the most spacious public market in Manila (Mercado de la Quinta) (Andrade 51). Under American rule, Quiapo's social and business life boomed further, as several colleges and universities were founded in the area, and restaurants, theaters and cinema houses flourished.

The city of Manila was the storm center of the 1896 Philippine Revolution (Zialcita 2006, p.28) and Quiapo was a key site. It would continue to be a key site for politics, protests, and revolutions well into the immediate postwar years and beyond. Revolutionary figures linked to Quiapo were Gregoria de Jesus, widow of Andres

Bonifacio (leader of the revolt against Spain), who organized the women's sector in the resistance movement, and her second husband, Julio Nakpil, who composed music for the Revolution and was secretary of the command north of Manila. In the 1930s, Quiapo was where espionage agents for Japan worked, using restaurants, refreshment bars, massage parlors, bazaars, and hotels as fronts. (Andrade 60). In the 1950s, Plaza Miranda, a concrete square in front of Quiapo Church, became the favorite venue for political gatherings and disgruntled ideological airings, thereby becoming a symbol of the Filipino's political conscience.

### **Background to the rich tapestry of music**

Quiapo bears many identities: "pulse of the nation," "heart of Manila," "hub of the city," "Manila's downtown," "crossroads of the nation," "state of mind," among others. The district has grown to be a vibrantly pulsating center of everything—commerce, worship, politics, folklore, popular culture, music. Contributing richly to this was the settling of the Japanese in the area in the 1920s-1930s, the Indians in the 1940s, and especially the Muslims in the 1970s.

Quiapo's musical life is multi-dimensional, as notoriously varied as the goods hawked *Sa Ilalim ng Tulay* (Under the Bridge).<sup>2</sup> To walk through its streets causes a dizzying musical assault so powerful on the senses: boom-bass technopop, classical piano music, Roman Catholic church bells, Malaysian videoke pop hits, the hymn to the Black Nazarene, the muezzin's periodic call to prayer, the streetvendor's cries, the rush of non-stop traffic, the blare of horns.

Today's Quiapo may seem but a shabby, decrepit shadow of the grand old days of gracious living and genteel music making among *ilustrado* (educated, elite) families emergent in the area in the 1850s. Here sprouted most of Manila's early theaters. Italian, French, and Spanish opera companies made their homes here, in the process discovering the innate musical gifts of the Filipinos. The Tagalog *zarzuela* played all over town. Church music was on a level equal to that of the splendid repertoires of the great Intramuros cathedrals. Vocal and instrumental groups were in great abundance. Quiapo was home to a rousing network of composers, singers, band and orchestra players, music teachers, impresarios, instrument makers and repairers, music merchants, conductors, pianists, music publishers, opera costume designers, and even opera make-up artists.

What explains this interest in Quiapo? Two things: first is an overwhelming awareness of urban heritage, which sadly is lacking in Philippine government policy, resulting in the deterioration of a place due to the neglect of its citizens, and its incapacity to reinvent itself. From a musicological standpoint, it was Quiapo, among all of Manila's suburbs (together with Intramuros), that offered promising results, due perhaps to its centrality and cultural diversity. An awareness of the old Quiapo, its history, arts, and culture, creates a basis not only for national pride but also pride in one's city or town. (Zialcita 23) Second is a more personal reason, and admittedly the impetus for the first. My grandmother, Felipa Yupangco Castrillo, was an opera singer who trained and sang in Quiapo. She studied under the noted tenor and maestro Victorino Carrion in the 1920s

in his *Escuela de Canto* (School of Singing), which later became known as the Schola Cantorum. *Cavalleria Rusticana*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Aida*, and *Pagliacci* were just a few of the operas she starred in. She sang regularly in Quiapo Church after she retired from the opera scene and despite having to care for six children, and in her final years, as long as she felt strong enough, she would commute by bus from the nearby suburb of San Juan to Quiapo for mass at the church and a stroll through the plaza and marketplace. Furthermore, I discovered that her father, my great-grandfather Evaristo Yupangco, was a composer who played the organ at nearby Sta. Cruz church and who often was to be found in Quiapo as well. A number of published music pieces unearthed from the pulverous family archives (*Lety*, *To the Filipino People*, *El Canto del Prisionero* among others), and seeing his name in documentation on music in Manila in the late 1800s, fuelled my desire to learn more about my own musical roots, the milieu of my forebears, and consequently relive the music of old Quiapo, their place of work.

### Early references to Quiapo music

The historical sketches of Spanish chroniclers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries provide some early descriptions of music in Quiapo. Though few and isolated, we are afforded a glimpse of the Quiapo of the past. In the Jesuit Pedro Murillo-Velarde's *Historia de la Provincia de Philipinas* (1749), mention is made of the "exquisitely-garbed *tiples*" (cathedral boy sopranos) of Quiapo who performed a Tagalog *coloquio*<sup>3</sup> (dramatic dialogue) "with much grace and skill" in a multicultural program in Antipolo ( a town north of Manila in Rizal province), marking the restoration of Our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage to her home shrine after being on board her last galleon voyage from Manila to Acapulco in 1748. (Murillo-Velarde 2181-219a). The presence of *tiples* in Quiapo affirms the city and countrywide tradition of musical training sponsored by the church, and their joining in the Antipolo program is a clear example of inter-parish participation in one another's religious feasts.

In Agustin de la Cavada y Mendez de Vigo's *Historia geográfica, geológica y estadística de Filipinas* (1876, 58), reference is made, albeit censoriously, to the character of Quiapo folk, together with those from the other Manila suburbs: "Those from the capital, Binondo, Sta. Cruz and Quiapo are so arrogant, not at all hardworking and with a marked fondness for dance and games." This and other accounts like it may perhaps have led to the creation of the folksong whose verses go: *Tondo, Binondo, Quiapo, Sta. Cruz; Todos los muchachos cara de upus* (All the young men look wasted).

Quiapo became known for its theaters, and while the next three accounts carry quite unsavory descriptions of these in the 1800s, the suburb steadily developed a reputation for theaters and theater music. Juan P. Gutierrez-Gay's *Manila en el Bolsillo: Indicador para el Forastero* (1881 37) says, "there is no important theater in this Capital. Those that are here are small, tasteless in décor and inelegant in design." He continues on a lighter note, "The *Teatro de Variedades*, with a statue of Isabel II in front, is known as 'el Coliseo Aristocrático,' for the elite come here. ... The *Teatro Filipino*, on Echague, has performances every night, and often these are well-attended." In Jaime Escobar y Lozano's *El Indicador del Viajero en las Islas Filipinas* (1885, 117), the

first theaters in Quiapo were pictured as “tiny and devoid of provisions for comfort and security, such that the theatrical ventures there suffered,” and in Waldo Jimenez de la Romera’s *Cuba, Puerto Rico y Filipinas* (1887–824), two theaters in Arroceros were described as being destroyed by calamities: the *Español* by fire and the *Varietades* by a typhoon.

### **The theaters**

Despite the initial poverty of the district and the documented difficulties faced by theatrical ventures in the beginning, Quiapo eventually became fertile ground for European opera, the Spanish zarzuela, and eventually the Tagalog *zarzuela*. Theaters evolved from crude *nipa* (palm) and bamboo structures to grand edifices. The earliest documented theaters in the area were the Teatro Lírico (1839), Teatro de Tondo (1841), Teatro Español (1846), and Teatro del Principe Alfonso (1862). These were followed by the Teatro de Varietades (1880), Circo Teatro de Bilibid (1870), Teatro Filipino (1880), and Teatro Popular (1893). In these theaters foreign opera companies such as the French Operetta Company, Juan Barbero Company, Pompeii Company and Assi-Panades Italian Opera Company developed regular opera seasons.

The late 1890s saw the rising of the Teatro Calderon and Teatro Zorilla. The latter, named after Spain’s national poet and dramatist José Zorilla (1817-93), was the grandest of all, surviving way into the American period as local zarzuela groups such as Compañia Ilagan, Gran Compañia de Zarzuela Tagala and the FERSUTA (Fernandez, Suzara, Tagaroma) lit up its stage with their celebrated singers: Maria Carpena, Yeyeng, Venancia Suzara, Patrocinio Tagaroma, Victorino Carrion, Alfredo Ratia, and Atang de la Rama. Two compositional milestones premiered here in 1902: what is called “the First Filipino Opera,” *Sandugong Panaginip* (Dream of a Blood Compact, libretto by Pedro Paterno, music by Ladislao Bonus), and the zarzuela *Walang Sugat* (Without a Wound, libretto by Severino Reyes, music by Fulgencio Tolentino), the success of which established the genre as the premiere theatrical genre in Manila from 1902 to the 1930s (Tiongson 2), edging out the old *comedia*,<sup>4</sup> which was the standard theatrical entertainment then. Another zarzuela, the enormously popular *Dalagang Bukid* (Country Lass, libretto by Hermogenes Ilagan, music by Leon Ignacio) premiered here in 1919, on the eve of the “Roaring 20s,” to packed, appreciative audiences.<sup>5</sup> This *zarzuela*, historically the most popular of its kind in this period, starred *zarzuela* and *kundiman* (art song) queen Atang de la Rama. It also became the first full-length Filipino feature film/silent movie in 1919. It reflected society and its mores (problems of morality and vice), and addressed the conflict between country and city values and manners. In a cabaret (dancehall) where American music is heard, a young country lass, a simple flower girl, brings a whiff of freshness, becoming the toast of the men and the cabaret crowd. The song *Nabasag ang Banga* (The Clay Pot Broke), from *Dalagang Bukid*, is in foxtrot rhythm; with its innocent sexual innuendo, it became the hit song of the time. (Fernandez 1994–91).

When *vodavill/bodabil* (vaudeville) and the cinema entered the Philippines in the American period, the Zorilla, adapting to the times, became a screening house for

Hollywood movies, while a new venue, the Manila Grand Opera House on nearby Avenida Rizal, became the setting for many cultural performances as well as events of historical significance, such as the inauguration of the First Philippine Assembly in 1907. Other theaters existing before the First World War in or near Quiapo were the following: Teatro Cine del Oriente, Oriental Theater, Cine Serena, Teatro Luz, Metropolitan Theater (on Plaza Miranda), Cine Majestic, Cine Principe, Cine It, Cine Ideal, Cine Esquire and Cine Empire. Spain had actually given us our first taste of the movies via the *cinematógrafo*, which played in these theaters, and in which many Filipino musicians found work as orchestra players. From the 1930s onwards the Metropolitan Theater on Plaza Lawton became the main setting for music. During the Japanese Occupation (1942-1945), the Met, as it was called, was the favored theater for concerts featuring all-Filipino casts, all-Filipino repertoires, or collaborations between Filipino and Japanese artists. Interestingly, the Japanese indirectly encouraged Filipino musical production by its blatant repudiation of American influence.

Doing a brisk business along with the theaters were the new, popular show houses like the Lerma Cabaret, Quiapo Saloon, Orpheum Vaudeville, Rivoli, and Savoy. The last bastion of American vaudeville, Filipino-style, was located just outside Quiapo in nearby Sta. Cruz, which many consider as part of Quiapo. (Bautista, 2006, 212). The Savoy, later renamed as Clover Theater on Echague (now Palanca), and which now is the City College of Manila, had the best and the most riotous entertainers: Pugo and Tugo, who became famous for mimicking the invaders in World War II, and the post-war stars Patsy and Lupito, Aruray, Dolphy, Panchito, Jose Cris Soto, and the torch singer Katy de la Cruz. It was here that Filipino-style vaudeville launched its last hurrah before the country lapped up television in the 1950s.

Not to be forgotten are the schools in the area—Colegio de la Consolación, Holy Ghost College, Colegio de San Beda, Far Eastern University—in whose auditoriums classical-music recitals took place. Prominent among these was the Art Deco Far Eastern University, the home of Maestro Jose Mossesgeld Santiago's opera company (to which my grandmother belonged), which performed season after season in the 1950s to a generation of opera lovers.

### **A musical beehive**

The profusion of theaters in Quiapo was proof that the district was a key player in the Manila music scene from the second half of the 1800s to the early postwar years. The constant bustle of people—native Quiapo folk, outsiders, foreigners—interacting in a complex and wide-ranging network of music-related ventures ensured the district's artistic enrichment. Many were born and lived in Quiapo; many others came only to work; others married into Quiapo families, thereby solidly implanting themselves in the district, such as Dr. Francisco Santiago, first Filipino director of the University of the Philippines Conservatory of Music (which initially was located in Quiapo in 1916).

Among the many noted musical luminaries born in Quiapo were the composer Julio Nakpil, who, apart from his patriotic works, such as several marches and *Marangal*

*na Dalit ng Katagalugan* (Noble Hymn of the Tagalog Region, which would have been the Philippines' national anthem had it been chosen by Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo, the republic's first president in 1898), wrote a number of short pieces for the piano; Leon Ignacio, composer of *Dalagang Bukid*; National Artist for Music Antonio Molina; *Maestro* Victorino Carrion; and music patron Bonifacio Arevalo, whose Banda Arevalo was one of the finest bands at the turn of the century. This Quiapo-based band provided music for the revolutionary government in 1898 and was well received at the Hanoi Exposition in 1902 under the baton of Ladislao Bonus. Arevalo defined Quiapo hospitality in the artistic sphere by taking his band members into his house, refurbishing their instruments, looking after their health, and being a dentist, even fixing their teeth! When an Italian opera company arrived in 1893, the members, too, stayed at his home, and their operas—*Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *Ernani*, *Sonnambula*—were staged at the Zorilla under his sponsorship. The daily and nightly convergences of music and conversation—Italian, Spanish, Tagalog—perhaps after *merienda* (afternoon tea) or after wining and dining at night, provide interesting tableaux of a past musical existence in Manila.

Other musical figures who contributed to Quiapo's vibrant musical life were the following: Bonifacio Abdon, violinist-composer-conductor; Juan Molina, founder of the noted Orquesta Molina; Evaristo Yupangco, composer-organist; Pedro Paterno, dramatist-historian-librettist; his sister Dolores Paterno, composer of the enchanting melody *La Flor de Manila* (popularly known as *Sampaguita*); Juan Javier, nationalist-impresario whose concept of *musica filipina* inspired a healthy balance of foreign and local numbers in his programs, including all-Filipino casting in Italian opera; Ladislao Bonus, called the "Father of the Filipino Opera";<sup>6</sup> Ernesto Vallejo, Manuel Luna, Simplicio Solis and Andres Dancel, all virtuoso-violinists; Yeyeng, Venancia Suzara and Maria Carpena, zarzuela superstars. Although not from Quiapo, a small street in the district was named after Carpena, described as "a real nightingale in the history of the Filipino zarzuela" (Manuel 1986). There were also the classically trained composers: Francisco Buencamino, Dr. Francisco Santiago, Nicanor Abelardo, and Antonio Molina, who all lived and worked in Quiapo. Though schooled in the classical idiom, they wrote pieces in the popular music style as well. Abelardo, regarded as the first Filipino musical modernist, was apprentice to Buencamino as a cinema pianist, supplying background music to the silent pictures before the era of the "talkies" (Epistola 1996 29), and he later on played in practically all the cinemas in the area.

Musical commerce was very much alive in Quiapo as we consider the proliferation of music stores, factories, and repair shops existing from 1850 onwards. Among these, mention must be made of the following pre-war shops: Almacén de Música de M. Benitez y Comp., Pio Trinidad y Co., Jose Oliver Succ. Co., La Lira Almacén de Música, Puerta del Sol Gran Bazar and La Estrella del Norte. Later music stores were the Lobregat Music Store, Philippine Education Co. (PECO), and Rhapsody Music Store, which is still popular among music students despite its cramped, musty interiors. Music publishing was also a lucrative endeavor. Francisco Buencamino established the Philippine Music Publishers on Platerias Street, billed as "the store for authors and musicians," which catered to the publishing needs of composers of the period

and regularly advertised updated lists of available Filipino pieces in music magazines. One such magazine was *Musical Philippines*, which, not surprisingly, was published in San Miguel in Quiapo. Browsing through a few issues from the 1940s to the 1950s, one marvels at the astounding number of professional music services advertised—from the mandatory piano, violin or voice lessons dictated by tradition, to solfege lessons and music tutoring, to tuning and repairing of instruments (organs, harmoniums, etc.), to direct importation of pianos and sheet music, to stage direction, designing of concert *ternos* (gowns) and opera costumes, especially *toreador* (bullfighter) costumes, and opera make-up.

Many music societies and music schools were founded in Quiapo, and their boardmembers were, more often than not, Quiapo personages. These institutions worked independently or concurrently to produce professional music events. With the help of influential Manilans, themselves culture enthusiasts, these institutions nurtured Filipino music and musicians. Among the notable music societies from the 1920s to the 1930s were the Manila Chamber Music Society, National Federation of Music, Philippine Society for Chamber Music, *Sociedad Musical de Sta. Cecilia*, and *Asociación Musical de Filipinas*. A prominent school in the early 1900s was the *Escuelas Confederadas de Música*, which had three branches: *Escuela de Canto* (under Victorino Carrion), *Escuela de Violin* (under Bonifacio Abdon), and *Escuela de Piano* (under Vicenta Marifosqui de Eloriaga). A great number of musicians in Manila received their training in these schools.

### **Music making in the private home**

Quiapo's private residences played a vital role in the preservation and nurturing of classical music. Often, if the maestro's house was too small, patrons or friends offered theirs. There are several documented examples of this intimate relationship between patron, performer, and audience. *Aida* and Schumann's *Choral* by the Escuela de Canto in private homes, and the Manila Chamber Music Society string quartet's backyard concert in a friend's house, with "music lovers filling the *azotea* (balcony), the kitchen and stairway, the late customers standing or squatting just to be able to listen to what the group called 'musica filipina'" (Manuel 1986 35) in the 1920s, are just three of many instances.

Illustrious Quiapo families like the Legardas, Tuazons, and Nakpils opened their doors to evening concerts, balls and other informal occasions for music making. The *tertulia* (intimate gathering at home with music, poetry, conversation) was common in these genteel households. The Legarda residences, for instance, were the setting for many remarkable performances, due to their close links with the Manila Symphony Orchestra, which was founded in 1926 and whose the board meetings and rehearsals were held at the residences. Several family members belonged to the orchestra, too, a clear demonstration of young men and women being encouraged to study a musical instrument, a skill associated with *urbanidad* (urban refinement), being as it was one of the several *bellas artes del hogar* (domestic fine arts). During family gatherings, a high

quality of music-making was the norm, and instrument studies were carefully planned with a view to forming family chamber ensembles. Foreign artists were likewise invited to perform here. In the 1930s, there were a French harpist and an all-male Cossack choir that gave a spectacular show in the dining hall, replete with knife-throwing and acrobatic stunts. Afternoons were filled with ballroom dancing, a pastime common among the genteel Quiapo folk.

### **Music in the places of worship**

Quiapo is a pilgrimage site. The mere mention of its name evokes potent images of the Black Nazarene, long-acknowledged Lord of Quiapo, and its home, the Basilica that looms large on Quezon Blvd., where the surge of devotees never ceases. Popularly known simply as “Quiapo Church,” its bells ring out daily at 6 a.m. for the Angelus (the traditional prayer recalling Mary’s single-heartedness and commitment to God’s will) and the start of another busy day in the district. In the old days, certain families of exceptional singers and organists, such as the Carrion and Mata families, came to be associated with the church. The many feasts, services, and ceremonies in the Roman Catholic liturgical calendar assured regular and unwavering opportunities, sustenance, and affiliation for musicians. A number of pieces for church use, now lost or as yet unlocated, were written by these musicians. Examples are *Despedida a Jesus Nazareno* (Farewell to Jesus the Nazarene) by Balbino Carrion; *Rosario a la Virgen de Monserrat*, *Rosario para Nuestro Nazareno Jesus*, *Gozo y Misa a Nuestro Padre Jesus Nazareno* (Joyful Song and Mass for Our Father, Jesus the Nazarene), *Misa a San Jose*, and *Siete Dolores de la Virgen* (Seven Sorrows of the Virgin) by Natalio Mata, the church’s first organist; *Misa Pastorela* (Shepherds’ Mass), *Salve a la Virgen de la Paz* (Hail to the Virgin of Peace), *Plegaria a Santa Teresa* (Invocation to St. Therese), and *Misa a San Roque* by Manuel Mata, his son. Special masses with concerts afterwards were often sponsored by music societies. An example was St. Cecilia’s feast day (November 22), commonly celebrated with orchestral music. These pieces and many others like them are nostalgic reflections of a bygone age, when churches resounded with the glory of Filipino liturgical music composed in the European Romantic idiom alongside masses by Spanish composers.

Two highly popular pieces for church use composed in the twentieth century are: *Ave Maria* with violin obbligato by Dr. Francisco Santiago (1919) and the hymn to the Nazarene *Nuestro Padre Hesus Nazareno* by National Artist Lucio San Pedro. Santiago composed the *Ave Maria* for his fiancée, who belonged to the aristocratic Ocampo family of Quiapo. Since then it has become one of the most popular and well-loved of Philippine *Ave Marias*, for its soaring vocal and string lines and its heartfelt Romantic expressivity. From its home base, Quiapo church, it has come to be performed in churches and concerts all over the country and abroad.

There were other notable places of Catholic worship—San Sebastian Basilica, the abbey church of San Beda (where plainchant used to be heard well into the twenty-first century at the Divine Offices and other services), and the churches just outside Quiapo’s perimeter, which were equally accessible by Quiapo folk. There are also several small

chapels, some of them family-owned, standing on street corners and around which people cluster during Holy Week for the *pabasa* (public chanting of the passion of Christ).

Places of worship outside the Catholic faith are the Filipino-founded *Iglesia ni Kristo* (Church of Christ/ INK, 1917), erected in Quiapo in 1936, the liturgy of which includes choral and congregational singing; *Dating Daan* (The Former Way), a popular religious movement which traces its origins in 1930 to a certain Nicolas Antiporda Perez (a former INK member who disagreed with some teachings), in which the predominantly male chanting reminds one of monks in a monastery (Obusan 151); and the Golden Mosque of the Muslims, which stands conspicuously on a street called, by some strange coincidence, *Globo de Oro* (Golden Globe). From this mosque, with its spectacular dome, its vermillion and blue design motifs and glass-tile mosaic ablaze in the sunlight, issues forth the muezzin's periodic call to prayer, now aided by the microphone and loudspeaker: *Allah's the greatest/I testify that I will worship only Allah!..that Muhammad is the last prophet/Let's come to prayer...success/It is better to pray than to sleep*. Quiapo Muslims call their muezzin *bilal*, and their call to prayer, the *bang*. The long, sustained melisma-laden melodies sound tense and strained as they summon the Muslim community, which constitutes a formidable percentage of the district's population. Maranaos comprise the majority, with the rest consisting of a sprinkling of Magindananaons, Tausugs, Badjaos, Samals, and a growing number of converts from other faiths.

There are Qu'ran-reading competitions and exhibitions held occasionally at the mosque or at teaching establishments like the Islamic Guidance Center, where lessons in Qu'ran reading are held. These take place during Ramadan, weddings, funerals, and at rites done on Muhammad's birthday. Expert readers become known for their skills in ornamentation, improvisation, phrasing and timing, as well as their correct pronunciation and intonation, clear, resonant voice, respectable presence and proper stage decorum. Outstanding readers from Quiapo are sent to vie in the National Qu'ran Reading Competition. From here it could be a step up to the Regional Competition held abroad. The aesthetics of this text-oriented tradition reveal a distinct dividing line between ritual and entertainment music, each with its own edicts. Musical instruments, imperative in secular music, are nowhere to be found in the temples of Islam. Strict adherents to the faith do indeed advocate the absolute avoidance of musical instruments, but traditions have slackened more so in the urban jungle that is Quiapo than in the southern islands of Mindanao and Sulu, where Islam reigns. Traditional Islamic society, for instance, does not consider chanting of the Qu'ran as music, yet for many Quiapo Muslims the distinction has been blurred, erased perhaps by the inundating presence of commercial pop music and the liberalism of urban society.

The places of worship in Quiapo are indeed multi-denominational, but it is doubtlessly the Basilica of the Black Nazarene that exerts an acutely palpable influence over the entire district, even spilling out headily over the entire metropolis and its environs, even to the provinces. As one enters the church, one is transfixed by the perpetual hum (whispered prayers, conversation, shuffling of feet) that fills the church,

especially on Fridays, the Nazarene's day. The life-size wooden, dark-skinned image of the Nazarene, crafted by unknown Mexican Indian artists in Mexico, was entrusted to a similarly unknown Recollect priest and arrived in the hold of a galleon in Manila at an undetermined date.<sup>7</sup> It is one of the oldest objects of devotion in the Philippines (Obusan 153), as the grand January 9 procession was already a Manila tradition in the early nineteenth century. (Bonilla 114). There are other Nazarene processions (during Passion Sunday, Good Friday, and in the old days, Holy Monday) but none as jam-packed, spectacular, and frenzied as the January 9 procession (the Nazarene's feast day), which has swelled into extremely massive proportions through the centuries, justifiably surpassing mere ritual. As early as mid-December and culminating on the feast day itself, brass bands hired by Quiapo merchants parade the streets and play at afternoon and evening programs called *serenata* on a stage erected on the plaza. Quiapo folk eagerly anticipate what they call *bangaan* (clash) wherein bands try to outdo or outplay one another in a marathon exhibition that ends only when there are no more pieces left to play, or when fatigue has set in. Spatial effects (such as a few instruments playing offstage or unseen behind a wall) were noted to have been used to achieve dramatic results.

On January 9 there are hourly masses at the church, the music at each led by a different choir that may either come from Quiapo or as far as suburbs such as Fairview and Parañaque, and the province of Bulacan. When the church gates are thrown open at mid-mass, around 1:30 pm, signaling the start of the procession, a surging sea of bodies greets the image as it makes its way out on its *carroza* (float). The procession winds its way through Quiapo's streets, its participants, a sweaty, heaving, barefoot mass of men (and now women, too) clambering over one another to touch the ropes used to drag the image and hurl their towels at the marshals manning the image atop the *carroza*, who then wipe these on the image's face and throw them back down. Cries of "ocho! ocho!" (eight! eight!) are heard as the ropes come askew, signifying the twisted numerical figure. There is no music, the bands having quieted down to give way to the frenzy. All one hears is an undying drone of raw energy, now ebbing, now rising. After several hours, darkness sets in, and the image winds its way back to the packed church. As it enters, it is greeted by rapturous shouts of "Viva! Viva el Señor!" (Long live the Lord!), wildly fervent applause, and an agitated hail of towels. The flushed crowd sings a stirring *Ama Namin* (Our Father), and the hymn to the Nazarene, *Nuestro Padre Hesus Nazareno*, an inflamed, thunderous unison that binds everyone in an ecstatic show of popular faith, bringing the tumult to rest.

To understand this phenomenon, mention must be made of the singular propelling internal force that drives the devotees: the *panata* (pledge or vow for favors asked or granted). This Filipino embodied value to reciprocate is manifested in many ways. In Quiapo it is clearly present in the way choirs from remote areas come to sing at mass in the church; in the way Quiapo businessmen unfailingly hire marching bands each year to parade during the *fiesta*, in gratitude for a prosperous year; in the way the barefoot devotees unflinchingly endure the physical chaos bordering on anarchy that takes place during the procession; and in the way they sing their personal vows and gratitude through the impassioned singing at the end.

## Today's Quiapo: changes and continuities

Quiapo used to be Manila's downtown in the first half of the 1900s. It was here that both urbanites and *provincianos* (country folk ) flocked for shopping. "Biyernes sa Quiapo" (Friday in Quiapo) was the catchphrase of the times, designating the unique marriage of piety and commerce that can only be seen in Quiapo, as the district continued to adhere to the market day economy after World War Two. (Bautista 217). Today, it is still "Biyernes sa Quiapo" even if it is no longer tagged as "Manila's downtown," for the posh, air-conditioned malls all over the metropolis have taken over. But the enticing air of a permanent fiesta persists—the densely crowded streets, the wildly eclectic goods for sale, the giddy mix of color and spectacle, sound, and smell. Plaza Miranda, "the people's square where political kites are flown," still simmers occasionally though variety shows are more often held on its stage nowadays.

The many theaters have vanished; a few were resurrected as movie houses, as opera and the *zarzuela* declined in popularity, due mainly to the rising cost of staging and the overwhelmingly irresistible attraction of the cinema. The once flourishing Metropolitan Theater, devastated during the Battle of Manila, continues to remain in its dormant state, long neglected by so-called cultural bodies ignorant of the remarkable performance history of this institution. Many old Quiapo families have since relocated elsewhere. Gone are the days of splendid domestic music making in the capacious Spanish-style homes of patrons, which have either been transformed into commercial complexes or left to deteriorate. One such house, though, still stands proudly on R. Hidalgo street, lone proud testament to Quiapo's history and brilliant musical life. This house, now converted into a museum, belonged to Ariston Bautista, prominent doctor-philanthropist who supported many Filipino artists, and his wife Petrona, sister to the revolutionary composer Julio Nakpil. In this house, many music-filled gatherings took place, according to Mercedes N. Zialcita, Julio's daughter, when Quiapo was still a bastion of gentility.

Music in Quiapo church has conformed through the years to decrees issued by the Vatican in response to the course of events and the needs of churchgoers. Developments in sacred music in Europe in the late nineteenth century were felt as well in the Philippines, such as the clamor for musical reform in the Roman Catholic liturgy due to masses that had come to acquire theatrical qualities.<sup>8</sup> Pius X's *Motu Proprio*, issued in 1903 in response to this crisis, laid down the guidelines for liturgical music, advocating restraint through the revival of Gregorian chant. In the Philippines, this ideal came to fruition in the sacred pieces of Marcelo Adonay (1848-1928), the first Filipino *maestro de capilla* of San Agustin Church in Intramuros. Records tell us that his music was performed in Quiapo church, particularly the *Salve Regina* and his *magnum opus*, the *Pequeña Misa Solemne sobre Motivos de la Misa Regia del Canto Gregoriano* (Little Solemn Mass on Themes of the Royal Gregorian Chant Mass), albeit much later in the 1940s. The decrees of Vatican Council II in 1965 caused the fading away of the Latin-church pieces and the rise of liturgical music in the vernacular. Today in Quiapo church, as in many other churches in the Philippines, liturgical music in the vernacular is

normally sung by the congregation, with the occasional Latin staples—often the *Ave Maria*, *Salve Regina*, and *Panis Angelicus*, sung by the trained choir. The old pieces used in church, especially those by the Quiapo composers—members of the Carrion and Mata clans, and other composers such as Hilarion Angeles—are currently unlocated or lost. Their possible retrieval, reconstruction, and eventual performance will constitute a valuable and significant contribution to urban cultural heritage studies and Philippine historical musicology.

Quiapo used to be the center of a vast commercial music infrastructure. This has largely dissipated into other Manila suburbs; many have closed shop, anachronisms in this day and age of virtual music, on-line publishing, and other forms of music technology. There are many new music stores, though, and these are of two kinds: the music-and-sporting-goods stores (which continue in the tradition of turn-of-the-century music stores on Escolta) and the music-and-electronics stores (which typify the contemporary music stores). Urban music making has taken on another dimension with the *videoke* bar (entertainment system featuring “live” singing with a microphone to pre-recorded accompaniment), which has mushroomed all over the district. For today’s Filipino, Quiapo is, sadly, synonymous with bargain electronics, and the ubiquitous cheap, pirated music and digital video.

What has remained constant through the centuries is Quiapo’s multicultural character, which is as strong as ever. Manila has always been awash with waves of many cultures but no other district in it is as richly pluralistic as Quiapo. The mix of Tagalog, Filipino, Chinese, Japanese, Indian, and Muslim cultures has resulted in a peculiar Quiapo temperament that has, in turn, bred a unique synthesis of social, cultural and religious acceptance, tolerance, and sharing. Quiapo is an interminable onslaught of cacophonous sound, held in check only by an unspoken pact of peaceful co-existence and the omnipotent presence of the Black Nazarene. Respect for the Nazarene and for one another’s cultures are unspoken dictates for multicultural business to prosper. But there have been significant musical changes from within; for example, in the early days of the Muslim community, instrumental music often used to be heard. Bossed gong ensembles used to contribute to the sound collage of Quiapo. Even the light, delicate tones of the two-stringed boat lute, often used for self-entertainment and courtship, could be heard. Today these are virtually non-existent, obliterated perhaps by the concerns of business and daily urban life, the skyrocketing costs of these instruments, and the hegemony of Western pop music. Public performances are rare; an entire block of Muslim shops that used to sell these instruments have either closed or transferred to Ermita, a district of Manila that is a tourist enclave.

There have been notably inevitable changes indeed in the musical landscape of Quiapo, considering the districts’s metamorphosis through the centuries from folk hamlet to Manila’s elite residential sector and economic hub to today’s mercantile heartland of the masses. Quiapo’s rich history and its multicultural, multireligious, and multiexistential circumstances all merge into fertile ground that may engender diverse musicological explorations in the future, such as more specific studies of the music in all the different places of worship, the lives and works of church musicians in the 1800s to

the early 1900s, the repertoire exclusively for the Nazarene, archival studies of theater presentations, opera and the *zarzuela* and their continuity into the American period, and the plethora of musicians and the extensive musical infrastructure behind them. On another level, other future studies on Quiapo music may involve the politics of private and public musical patronage, music and revolution, the confluence of musics and faiths, the Indian and Chinese musical presence, musical acculturation, the modernization of old traditions, and the globalization of music and the blurring of cultural boundaries in a pervasively pluralistic “global village” but all uniquely and paradoxically sustained by a centuries-old tradition: the devotion to the Lord of Quiapo, the Black Nazarene.

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<sup>1</sup> Quiapo used to be one of the *pueblos* (towns) of the Provincia de Tondo, the capital of which was the pueblo of Tondo. In 1856 the Provincia de Tondo became the Provincia de Manila. When the Americans came, Manila was enlarged beyond Intramuros to include its surrounding *arrabales* (suburbs) which then became Manila's districts. (Andrade 42)

<sup>2</sup> *Sa Ilalim ng Tulay* (Under the Bridge) refers to the picturesque marketplace beneath the 2-lane Quezon Bridge, which was inaugurated in 1938 to support the enormous volume of north-south traffic, linking Quiapo to Intramuros over the Pasig River.

<sup>3</sup> *Colloquio* is another name for the secular type of *comedia*, a play written in verse (usually octosyllabic or dodecasyllabic quatrains) which presents the epic battles between Christian kingdoms in medieval Europe and the Moorish kingdoms of Spain. Descended from the Spanish *comedia*, the earliest local *comedia* in Spanish and Latin was documented as first appearing in Cebu in 1598.

<sup>4</sup> The *comedia/komedy* originated from the Spanish *comedia* of the sixteenth century; the local version first appeared in Latin and Spanish in Cebu in 1598. It is a play in verse using conventions such as *marcha* (march) for exits and entrances, *batalla* (choreographed fighting) and *magia* (magic effects). There are two types—the *komedy de santo* with sacred themes, and the secular type (see endnote 3)

<sup>5</sup> *Dalagang Bukid*, due to its immense popular appeal, was said to have been staged about 5000 times. Some nights, it was even staged repeatedly. Ilagan reputedly earned 500,000 pesos throughout its stage history, raking in 1,750 pesos nightly at the Zorilla or the Manila Grand Opera House. His zarzuelas were always in demand. For 300 pesos a show, local groups, committees, literary or musical societies and schools could rent his scripts and mount them. It is safe to presuppose that Ilagan's music, among others, was all over Manila during this time.

<sup>6</sup> Manuel (1970, 2:57) cites a passage from Wenceslao Retana's *Noticias Histórico-Bibliográficas del Teatro en Filipinas* (1909). From around 1886 to 1888, Bonus established an opera company in Pandakan whose members were all "excellent musicians and singers of the purest Tagalog breed." He was said to be the moving force too behind an all-female orchestra in Pandakan known as Orkestang Babae.

<sup>7</sup> The first group of Recollect friars (now in charge of San Sebastian Church and San Sebastian College in Manila) arrived in 1606. Thus it is probable that the statue also arrived on that year or a few years after.

<sup>8</sup> Theatricality in church music was evident in the melodies modeled on operatic idioms and rhythms derived from dance, excessive length, and use of grandiose musical forces. Berlioz's *Grand Messe des Morts* or Verdi's *Stabat Mater* come to mind. In Spain this trend was called *meyerbeerismo* (after Giacomo Meyerbeer's French Grand Opera) and *rossinismo* (after Gioachino Rossini's exciting, pompous style). Charles Gounod's *St. Cecilia Mass* (1885) was often performed in Manila in the second half of the 1800s. This was condemned on liturgical grounds because the composer inserted words in the last movement that are not normally part of the sung text. (Grout-Palisca, 622)